

Manuel Cohen ~

Manuel Cohen, 90, of Moncks Corner, SC, entered into eternal rest Thursday, May 8, 2025. His Funeral Service will be held at the Graveside, Sunday, May 11, 2025, in Mount Pleasant Memorial Gardens, 1308 Mathis Ferry Road at 4:00 pm. Arrangements by J. Henry Stuhr, Inc. Mount Pleasant Chapel.

Manuel was born on October 6, 1934, in Hickory, North Carolina, to Harry Cohen and Tess Lederer Cohen. He attended Lenoir-Rhyne College for his freshman year, where he played collegiate basketball, and later transferred to and graduated from the University of Georgia.

Since 1960, Manuel was the proud proprietor of Barron's Department Store in Moncks Corner, where he worked faithfully and joyfully until the week of his passing. He was a beloved figure in the community, known for his dedication, kindness, strong work ethic, generosity and wonderful stories. Manuel was known by many as "Mr. Barron," "Freddy Fourdown," and "Marion Santee" through his business endeavor as the owner of The Berkeley Independent, the local newspaper of Moncks Corner.

Manuel had many fascinating stories to tell---his billiard game played against Willy Mosconi in a pool hall in Athens, Georgia, meeting Willie Nelson, opening Daldee's gym for boxers at the Moncks Corner railroad depot, and meeting Donald Trump in 1999 in NYC. He was friendly with Leon Levine, who founded Family Dollar in 1959. Leon asked Manuel back then to be his business partner in the Family Dollar business venture. Manuel was tempted to do so, but due to his busy involvement in his own family's businesses and the death of his father, he had to decline the offer. Manuel's business history began in 1941 when he was seven years old. He opened a lemonade stand with the help of some friends and sold lemonade and candy bars bought from a local wholesale distributor.

Manuel is survived by his wife, Elinor Cohen; his daughter, Kim Cohen Dye; his son, Harris Cohen; and his sister, Sara Gordon. He was the cherished grandfather of Tiffany Shankman (Elijah Shankman) and Marissa Dye, and the proud great-grandfather of Rosalie Shankman. He will be remembered with deep love and admiration by his family, friends, and all who knew him.



Manuel Cohen, a Remarkable Gentleman

MONCKS CORNER, S.C. – A long-time pillar in the Moncks Corner business community has died. Manuel Cohen, 90, the owner of Barron's Department Store, passed away Thursday night. According to family, he worked "faithfully and joyfully" at the store until a few days before his death.

Described as a hard worker and a kind man with a gentle soul, loyal customers flooded the department store's Facebook page Friday with condolences and trips down memory lane of the beloved businessman and philanthropist.

"My dad always spoke so highly of him. He gave him his first job and taught him so much about business and how to treat people," one person posted. "It wasn't only about profit---it was about supporting a whole community. His memory is a blessing for our whole town."

"My thoughts and prayers are with his family. Mr. Cohen helped sponsor me so many times in pageants, baton competitions, etc. I never asked him that he didn't say yes. He was a pillar of the community and will be greatly missed!" another person posted.

Moncks Corner Mayor Tom Hamilton described Cohen as a "remarkably generous individual" who consistently gave to numerous charitable organizations throughout the Lowcountry. "I thoroughly enjoyed our conversations over the years, discussing a wide range of topics. Carolyn and I, together with all the employees of the Town of Moncks Corner, extend our sincerest prayers and love to his family," Hamilton said.

Founded in 1923, Barron's is the oldest locally owned business in Berkeley County. The old-fashioned department store, which is located on East Main Street in the heart of town, first opened for business under Ben Barron.



In July 2024, Habitat for Humanity honored Cohen for his continued support of the Berkeley County community. "He represented his family and employees by accepting our Community Partner Award. THANK YOU to the Cohens and the love they continue to show to those around them who are in need of affordable housing," the organization posted to their Instagram account. (CREDIT: Habitat for Humanity/Instagram)

According to the *South Carolina Digital Library*, Barron emigrated from Lithuania at age 14, sponsored by his uncle, Zelig Behrmann, a merchant in Moncks Corner. After serving in World War I, he returned to Moncks Corner and resumed working for his uncle. In 1923, Barron purchased a failing business and transformed it into Barron's Department Store. By the time he sold the store to Cohen in 1960, it had grown into the largest department store in Moncks Corner.

In addition to owning Barron's for nearly seventy years, he was also an owner/investor of The Berkeley Independent. It was later sold to the Evening Post Publishing in 2001.

A graveside service will take place Sunday, May 11 at 4 p.m. at Mount Pleasant Memorial Gardens, which is located at 1308 Mathis Ferry Rd.

Nikki Gaskins Campbell

A lifelong Berkeley County resident, Nikki Gaskins Campbell is an Emmy-nominated journalist with more than 20 years of experience covering news. She is a graduate of the University of South Carolina with a degree in broadcast journalism.

Edited by Keith Gourdin